



## Leadership Board Minutes for January 28, 2025

Parker United Methodist Church  
11805 S. Pine Drive, Parker, CO 80134

### Leadership Board Members:

Ron Wyckoff (Chair)	John Quest
Dave Ambors	Laura Easter Rainwater, Senior Pastor
Kim Bimestefer	Li Roberson (Vice-Chair)
Lacye Cahill, Lay Member to Annual Conference	Eric Ross
Kelly Evans	Emily Shaffer, Little Blessings Preschool Director
Susan Gustin	Elizabeth Gore Stanley
Heidi Handel	Linda Thomas
Julie Kronbach, Lay Leader	

- I. Call to order: Ron called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Kim opened us with a reflection on how we stand on the rock of Jesus, offered scriptures as encouragement (Micah 6:8, Romans 8:28, Joshua 1:9, Isaiah 1:17-18)
- III. Review and approval of minutes of December 3, 2024
  - A. Eric moved to approve; Julie seconded
    1. Approved unanimously
- IV. Senior Pastor's Report
  - A. Worship updates: 2024 totals
    1. 9 a.m. service avg, = 191 for 2024, 197 for 2023
    2. 10:30 a.m. service avg. = 62 for 2024, 58 for 2023
    3. Total in person = 253 for 2024, 255 for 2023
    4. Online viewers = 176 for 2024, 212 for 2023
    5. Average concurrent online worshippers = 50, approximately 70 total
  - B. Lent 2025
    1. Ash Wednesday = March 5
      - a. Drive-through ashes morning and afternoon
      - b. Service at 7:00 p.m. in sanctuary
    2. Sundays in Lent March 9 – April 6
    3. Palm Sunday = April 13
      - a. One service with choir cantata
      - b. All-church event afterwards, probably potluck + Easter activities for families
    4. Maundy Thursday = April 17
      - a. Evening service
    5. Good Friday = April 18
      - a. Evening service
    6. Easter Eve, April 19
      - a. Afternoon service
    7. Easter Sunday, April 20
      - a. Two identical services at 9:00 and 10:30

8. Easter Monday, April 21
  - a. Church office closed
- C. Question of non-denominational start-up church using our facilities on Saturday evenings
  1. Anticipating about 30 in worship initially
    - a. Won't be able to pay more than \$1000/month
    - b. More theologically conservative than we are
    - c. This pastor has shared space with a Methodist church before
    - d. Would use Commons area, not sanctuary
      - 1) Sound system much more simple than sanctuary
      - 2) Jason/Kurt would train on the Commons sound system
    - e. Are hoping to engage an immigrant community
      - 1) Pastor is Indian
  2. Discussion
    - a. Julie – contract should include info on clean-up
    - b. Kim – why is this church moving?
      - 1) Laura – this is a new start-up
      - 2) Pastor has done a start-up before but then changed roles, so this would be a new congregation
    - c. Linda – would the contact be open-ended?
      - 1) Laura – probably for 6 months to begin with
    - d. Elizabeth – are there guidelines from the Conference to protect us? What if problems/abuses arise?
      - 1) Laura – all outside liability. They are not us
    - e. Emily – doesn't foresee problems with timing. Little Blessing events can be scheduled for Fridays rather than Saturdays
    - f. Julie – there should be a hold-harmless clause in the contract
  3. Laura -- We have not recently done an evaluation of costs for other groups using our building
    - a. Need a team to begin this
    - b. Involve Finance and Building team members
    - c. Linda volunteered to help
  4. Ron and Li moved to authorize Laura to move forward with discussions with pastor for initial 6-month time period
    - a. Dave seconded
    - b. Passed unanimously
- D. Response to events
  1. Laura – many churches have drafted statements in response to recent political actions
  2. Group consisting of Laura, Pastor Cody, Kim, Julie, Ron and Phil Evans will discuss whether/how it would be appropriate for our church to respond

## V. Business items

- A. Installation of new Board positions – Ron
  1. Presented new officers starting now
    - a. Chair – Li
    - b. Vice-Chair – Kelly
    - c. Idea is for rolling leadership of Board so past Chair is available to help current Chair, with training for Vice-Chair to assume Chair role the following year
  2. Presented team leaders/liasons from Board
    - a. Each team should have a liaison from the Board
    - b. Board liaison can be but is not necessarily the team lead
    - c. There can be more than one Board member on each team

- d. A new team focused on Sustainment (addressing budget problems, particularly mortgage)
        - 1) Kim, Ron, Eric and Linda listed on team
        - 2) Emily and Layce asked to be added to the team
  - 3. Ron moved to present the slate for Board approval
    - a. Eric seconded the motion
    - b. Passed unanimously
- B. Little Blessings – Emily
- 1. Great news on enrollment
  - 2. Current enrollment now at 90%
  - 3. Opened enrollment for 2025-26 year in December
    - a. Already at 85% enrolled for upcoming year
  - 4. Eric – are you affected by federal funding freeze announced yesterday?
    - a. Emily – didn't think so
- C. Finance – Eric
- 1. 2025 draft budget sent out ahead of time
  - 2. As it currently stands, projects a deficit of \$157K
  - 3. Discussion
    - a. Dave – where does mission apportionment appear in the budget, and can we reduce that commitment to ease our budget problems?
      - 1) Linda – apportionment currently at 10%, already a reduction
      - 2) Eric – as a connectional church we want to maintain a commitment to the larger Methodist church, but the level of commitment could be considered
    - b. Dave – what is included in the large line item Trustees?
      - 1) Eric – insurance, utilities
      - 2) Major maintenance (e.g., replacement of HVAC units in 2024) often paid for from endowment fund dedicated to maintenance
    - c. Dave – what is included in Other Income?
      - 1) Building use fees
    - d. Kim – What was the value of the special donations we got in late 2024 for the sanctuary improvements (organ, projectors, lighting)? How does that impact the budget?
      - 1) Laura – Total was about \$90K, not included in the budget
      - 2) Kim – would be good to have information on those donations as a measure of the congregation's commitments
    - e. Kim – what about the funding for the playground improvements for Little Blessings?
      - 1) Emily – similar to sanctuary improvements, no impact on budget
      - 2) Linda—there is accounting for the special projects outside of the budget
    - f. Laura – even though we work to keep expenses as even as possible, there will be changes over time that we can't necessarily project or control to the three big buckets – salaries, mortgage, insurance
    - g. Julie – the Christmas Eve service offerings – where to?
      - 1) Laura – only about \$10K, went to the General Fund this year rather than to a mission
    - h. Julie – would be good to focus on a theme this year of “How can I help?”
      - 1) Help could be in terms of money, time, imagination
      - 2) Kim – getting people's help should be part of the goal of the Sustainability team. People feel less helpless in face of problems
      - 3) Heidi – people can help in their areas of interest

- 4) Emily – it’s important to plug the activities of the church, make us more visible to the local community
  - 5) Linda – getting people *into* our church should be the work of everyone
  - 6) Lacye – help people know how they can make a difference around us
  - 7) Kim – this is a unique time for us to be a place where people can connect to help others
  - 8) Laura – while this is a good message from the pulpit, message needs to be wider than that
  - 9) Ron – we should invite congregation to join Sustainability team to expand our reach
  - 10) Laura – would be good to promote a culture of invitation within the church
- i. Kim challenged us to shoot for a budget target that doesn’t eat into the reserves as much as presented budget does
- 1) Linda – we need better idea of upcoming expenses, such as building fixes John has discussed
    - i. John – currently projecting \$60k to address water problems
    - ii. Laura – This money could come from an endowment fund or the trustees reserve
  - 2) Eric – suggests that we approve budget for January – May, then revisit
  - 3) Dave – are any major expenses non-linear?
    - i. Laura – expenses generally paid monthly, but income may not be linear as some people pay for entire year at the beginning
  - 4) John – concerned about our insurance exposure
    - i. Julie – let’s talk offline
  - 5) Linda – important to list all assets/liabilities in addition to the strict budget items to have better big-picture understanding of church’s financial position
  - 6) Kim – would like to see every team have dashboards with focus on 5-7 most important goals
  - 7) John – where does money for the grounds care fit into the budget?
    - i. Laura – Trustees line item
  - 8) Kim – we need to encourage more people to take part in the sustainability discussion
    - i. Lacye and Emily volunteered to take part
    - ii. Ron encourages soonest possible meeting
  - 9) Lacye – do we know ahead of time that money is coming in (bequest/endowment)?
    - i. Laura – sometimes, but not necessarily.
    - ii. Also different legal requirements on simple bequests vs. an endowment
    - iii. Endowments are all invested with a Methodist organization
4. Ron – are we ready for a motion?
- a. Kim moved that the Board accept the budget as presented for January – May, with the goal of finding ways to increase income/reduce expenses so that the year-end total results in a hit to the reserves of about \$90k (rather than the projected \$157K)
  - b. Julie seconded
    - 1) Dave – hopes that we will consider reducing mission obligation to conference
    - 2) Julie – one way to increase income is to increase costs of VBS
      - i. All of us can suggest small changes that will help

- 3) Ron – If have suggestions, send to members of the Sustainment team
- c. Passed unanimously
- D. Stewardship – Li
  - 1. Update as of 1/27/2025
    - a. 2025: Received 122 pledges, totaling \$537,297.23 (97.6% of goal ~ \$550K)
    - b. 2024: Received 118 pledges, totaling \$491,084.00
    - c. This means a net increase of 4 pledges, with increase of \$45,213.23 over 2024
    - d. We have 16 new members now pledging
    - e. We have 12 members who are now pledging who haven't pledged in a while, though they were regular contributors. This is great news!
    - f. The not-so-great news is that we have fewer people pledging who pledged in 2024
    - g. This means we must estimate our income
  - 2. Reviewing 2024 givers and pledgers:
    - a. We anticipate \$60,000 from those who pledged in 2024 but have not yet in 2025
    - b. We anticipate \$96,000 from those who gave regularly in 2024 but did not give a named pledge in 2025
    - c. All told, our estimated giving (pledges + regular contributors + plate offering) is similar to the income in 2024
    - d. Additional named pledges mean we feel we can count on that income stream
  - 3. Ron – can this news be celebrated from the pulpit?
    - a. Laura – maybe not pulpit, but Midweek and monthly newsletter
    - b. Kim – need to be careful of words – good news, but still concern over the big picture
    - c. Li – we're still behind the eight ball
  - 4. Ron -- will there be continued effort to follow up?
    - a. Li – probably not
  - 5. Ron – we need to remind online credit card givers to change the budget year to 2025
    - a. Sarah can assist

## VI. New business

### A. Ron --Use of Fellowship Hall

- 1. Donor would like to provide basketball hoop
  - a. Cody envisioning Fellowship Hall as “sports arena”
    - 1) Volleyball stations and net
  - b. Pickleball also taking place
- 2. John – we should make sure this does not contradict the intentions of the donor who provided the funds to upgrade the Fellowship Hall
  - a. Has been talk of adding TVs to the space – doesn't go well with balls
- 3. Lacye – Youth have been considering once-a-month fundraiser to get sports equipment
  - a. Would be good to also have expectations of Youth to be more present in the congregation, e.g., serving as ushers/greeters
- 4. Linda – we need better coordination of donations – need to review before accepting
- 5. Elizabeth – we also need to be careful not to discourage donations – people often like to give to specific things
- 6. John – TVs are going into new classrooms in Fellowship Hall
- 7. Laura – Trustees used to review expenses/donations related to the building
  - a. Need to be careful not to add to bureaucracy
- 8. Lacye – need a gracious way to respond to potential donor to say “Let's discuss”

9. Heidi – what about insurance impact of activities such as pickleball?
    - a. Laura – covered under current policy
    - b. Julie – we should add an assumption of risk form
  10. Emily – Use of Fellowship Hall should be a major focus of Sustainment team
  11. She knows of a preschool that makes more money from renting its gym than tuition
- B. Ron – we need photos of all Leadership Board members

- VII. What to communicate to congregation?
- A. 5-month budget
  - B. Continuing education on budget difficulties
    1. Laura + Li to work on initial message

- VIII. Next meeting
- A. Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
  - B. Heidi will provide the devotion

- IX. Julie closed us in prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Review of Minutes: The meeting minutes of January 28, 2025 were submitted to Laura, Ron and Li for review on February 11, 2025.

Susan Gustin, Leadership Board Member